

MOBILE

Twitter beats Facebook in real-time relevance to mobile ads

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By CHANTAL TODE

Twitter's mobile advertising strategy just pulled ahead in the race with Google and Facebook through a mixture of real-time content video tied to TV viewing and ads targeting TV viewers who have seen an ad.

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Mobile users are increasingly watching TV with a smartphone or tablet nearby so they can engage further with content, including commenting about it on social media sites such as Twitter. By providing marketers with new ways to leverage mobile to tie into TV content and ads, Twitter is taking an important step toward attracting major brands with big advertising budgets to its platform.

"It gives Twitter an advantage over Facebook because it is a real-time channel where news breaks and spreads, and immediate conversations about 'live' events take place," said Mark Pinset, social and content lead at [Metia](#), Seattle.

"While people also use Facebook in real-time, it is balanced with far more retrospective content," he said. "Twitter gives advertisers more opportunity for targeted messages with real-time relevance, particularly as people are two-screening with mobiles and tablets.

"It's definitely a step forward for Twitter and possibly for the first time uses the inherent

strength of the medium to offer clear opportunities to advertisers.”

Video fingerprinting

One of the developments introduced last week is TV ad targeting that uses video fingerprinting to enable marketers to engage directly with people on Twitter who have been exposed to their ads on TV.

Whenever a commercial airs during a TV show, Twitter can determine where and when it ran and then identify users on Twitter who tweeted about the program where the ad aired during that program to deliver an ad in Promoted Tweets.

□ Another new program, Twitter Amplify, focuses on driving the social and TV conversation with the ability for media companies to deliver real-time in-Tweet video clips.

Twitter Amplify has already been used by broadcasters of sporting events and is now extending this into other broadcast categories through partnerships with BBC America, Fox and The Weather Channel.

“It essentially means that advertisers have the opportunity to deliver targeted messages that have much more relevance and context, given they can identify not only what individuals are watching, but potentially things such as their emotional state,” Mr. Pinset said.

“For instance, if a television show is particularly poignant, an advertiser might deliver a positive, uplifting message,” he said. “Or if a show was intense and adrenaline-filled, a soothing, calming proposition could be an effective ad.

“Contextually, advertisers can also participate in the conversation prompted by individual shows by voicing an opinion on the plot line or characters. Timeliness and context can only help make advertising more powerful.”

Social conversations

Twitter’s TV ad targeting was developed using technology from Twitter’s Bluefin Labs acquisition.

TV ad targeting for Promoted Tweets is available in a limited beta to selected partners running national TV commercials in the United States.

□ The strategy addresses the way that consumers are increasingly engaging with mobile while watching TV. Twitter reports that last year, 32 million people in the U.S. tweeted about TV programming.

Additionally, Twitter reports that 64 percent of mobile-centric users on Twitter use it in front of the TV at home.

The strategy is based on the assumption that users engaged enough with a TV show to tweet about it are likely to have seen the commercials that aired during the show.

The idea behind Twitter Amplify is to enable brand advertisers to reach the social conversation happening around shows they are advertising in via sponsorships.

For example, ESPN and Ford Fusion recently brought football fans Instant Replays in Tweets during every college football bowl game.

The challenge for marketers with these new offerings will be in ensuring that their messages are contextually relevant and they are not simply replicating what they are doing elsewhere and shrinking it down for mobile.

“With 95 percent of public conversation around TV taking place on Twitter for major broadcast advertisers, Twitter Amplify is a huge opportunity to squeeze more mileage out of the investment to drive deeper engagement and valuable earned impressions,” said Alex Jacobs, vice president and director of social marketing at [Digitas](#), San Francisco.

“TV advertisers have the most to gain from the product,” he said. “However, they also face the greatest challenge.

“Traditional broadcast marketers aren't necessarily bleeding-edge digital marketers, and will have to mature to learn to use Twitter Amplify to its full potential. Twitter is the echo-chamber, and the value is in it's ability to spark and amplify word of mouth.”

Final Take

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